



Vol. 47, No. 23 • 374th Airlift Wing • Yokota Air Base, Japan • Friday, June 23, 2006

2 News Motorcycle
mentorship key to safety
4 Commentary
Leaders must evolve
5 Feature Space-A
destinations

Expansion begins on fitness center *Traffic, parking adjustments required*

By Staff Sgt. Karen J. Tomasik
374th Airlift Wing Public Affairs

Since the Samurai Fitness Center's renovation was completed last December, Yokota residents have been anticipating the future expansion into a second building next door.

The wait is nearly over for work to begin on the annex, but changes to existing structures and roads will occur as part of the upgrade construction.

"In order to build the annex on the south side of the Samurai Fitness Center we need to demolish Bldg. 690," said 1st Lt. David Washington, chief of the Japanese Facilities Improvement Plan (JFIP) Element, 374th Civil Engineer Squadron. "Because that building sits between the fitness center and Yume Child Development Center, we need to close off the entire road running between those two buildings and a part of the current CDC parking lot."

In order to accommodate patrons of the CDC, the contractor for the project will construct a new road on the east side of the Samurai Fitness Center and annex site between Tunner Street and the CDC.

"The road closure is scheduled to begin July 10 and will be permanent," said Lieutenant Washington. "The old road's location is right where we'll be building the new annex. Since part of the CDC parking lot will also be lost to the construction, all remaining parking will become CDC use only."

The construction of the facility, which will house open cardio and weight areas, additional aerobics rooms, a secondary multi-use gym and the new Health and Wellness Center, is currently estimated for completion in fall 2007.

A future phase of the project will demolish the current HAWC and construct additional parking at that location. The project is scheduled for completion in May 2008.

"The displaced parking spots will be constructed in the footprint of Bldg. 690," said Lieutenant Washington. "For gym patrons, parking is available north of the Samurai Fitness Center in the 500 block area."

In the future, parking will also be available in the footprint of the current HAWC location and the old bowling center across from the Yokota Community Center."

A good cause



photo by Senior Airman Katie Thomas

Master Sgt. Jeff Miller, 374th Maintenance Squadron, donates blood June 13 to the Armed Services Blood Bank Center with the help of Army Specialist Joe Wurschum. The ASBBC from Okinawa, Japan, visited June 12 and 13 and collected more than 100 units of blood from the base community.

Common Access Card comes to Yokota, card is part of future for Air Force



photo by Capt. Ben Alumbaugh

Senior Airman Joie Taylor, 374th Logistics Readiness Squadron, gets her new Common Access Card.

By Capt. Ben Alumbaugh
374th Airlift Wing Public Affairs

By July 1, all Airmen, civilians and Japanese nationals on Yokota will have to have a working Common Access Card and reader on their computer.

Right now, the Military Personnel Flight is working around the clock to ensure all Airmen have a working CAC card.

"We start squadron appointments at 7 a.m. and take our last customer at 7 p.m. in order to complete the estimated more than 1,000 cards that have to be issued," said Maj. Sara Custer, MPF commander.

For many, the Common Access Card is just a replacement for the green military ID card used for many years. The new card is not only the way to operate a person's work computer but also doubles as the person's ID.

The card's ability to operate a person's computer is just one of the benefits of the new technology.

The cards carry digital certificates that allow a user to more securely identify themselves to a computer network. "These cards make the computer network virtually impossible to hack," said Staff Sgt. John Baker, information assurance manager for the 374th Communications Squadron.

"The other thing is these are usable world wide. You will no longer have to get certified at each base when

you in-process at future duty stations."

The unique digital certificates stored on the CAC are highly important. The certificates are used to confirm the identity of cardholders to Air Force computer networks. The same certificates also allow Airmen to digitally sign and encrypt e-mail messages. "The CAC will eliminate phishing and spam for users too," said Sergeant Baker.

Once use of the CAC is fully implemented, users won't use their network account names and passwords. Instead, they will log in to work computers by sliding their CAC into readers and entering a personal identification number.

"The card will eventually give people access to more than just computers," said the sergeant. "It will give a person access to buildings and other resources."

The common access card is not unique to the Department of Defense. Similar cards are used throughout the civilian world and government agencies, both in the United States and other countries. The technology is similar to the "Security Identity Module" chips used in cellular phones.

In addition to certificates, the cards also store a member's full name, e-mail address, date of birth, gender, blood type, organ donor status, military exchange and commissary status as well as meal plan status. All the information is protected by a personal identification number.

Base Motorcycle Safety Program, mentorship is key

By Master Sgt. Dominique Brown
374th Airlift Wing Public Affairs

There are currently 226 identified motorcycle riders in the Yokota community, and the 374th Airlift Wing Safety Office's goal is to keep them all riding safely. This number includes all Status of Forces Agreement members assigned here who own or operate a motorcycle.

With clear-cut guidelines and requirements, the Motorcycle Safety Program keeps a close hold on all community riders with a wingman mentality through the Motorcycle Mentorship Program.

"The mentorship program is basically riders helping riders," said Tech. Sgt. Mario Dacosta, 374th Airlift Wing motorcycle mentor and noncommissioned officer in charge of Human Performance Training at the Wing Safety Office.

"Each squadron or group has at least one volunteer unit motorcycle mentor as the focal point for all motorcycle issues," said Sergeant Dacosta, whose job as the wing motorcycle mentor is to give the unit mentors information to pass on to all riders.

Unit mentors take on a lot of responsibility to help ensure motorcycle safety. As part of the Motorcycle Safety Program, each mentor maintains a database on all riders that details their rider's ex-

perience level, age, training dates and type and size of motorcycle.

Mentors also setup monthly rider's safety meetings that are required for all riders under 26 years old and/or riders that have been riding for less than one year to attend. It also informs new riders about the paperwork, equipment and training required to start riding.

"I think the mentor program is a great way to help new riders learn all the aspects of riding," said Master Sgt. Matthew Arant, U.S. Forces-Japan emergency actions controller and also a motorcycle mentor and rider coach.

"Mentoring is also a way to make sure all the motorcyclists on Yokota receive vital up-to-date information with regulation changes, safety issues and activities happening within the motorcycling community."

Sergeant Arant is one of six motorcycle members who are also rider coaches. The all-volunteer coaches teach the required motorcycle courses to ride here.

"We always need more coaches because duty and leave schedules vary and at times there is no one available," said Sergeant Dacosta, who emphasized patience for individuals waiting for a class slot.

After a new rider is qualified, there are still restrictions for safety reasons. Some of those limitations include riding

a motorcycle with a 600cc engine or less and being restricted to riding on base for 30 days and 250 kilometers of riding.

Even experienced riders may also have some safety restrictions initially upon arriving to Yokota depending on age and experience levels.

Regardless of experience, as part of the Motorcycle Mentorship Program, riders are encouraged to keep each other in check.

"It is important that riders look each other over with a safety check for proper equipment before a ride, and to correct each other for any traffic infractions or unsafe riding," said Sergeant Dacosta.

For more information about motorcycle safety, the Mentorship Program, technical information, classes available, forms needed or just where to ride in the area, visit the Yokota Motorcycle Club website at <http://www.yokotamc.org/>.

"The Web site is a great all-around source of information for riders here," said the wing mentor. "Riders can find out what events are coming up or join in on a group ride for the weekend."

The next mandatory event scheduled is the quarterly Motorcycle Riders call on June 30, at 4 p.m. at the E-Club, which will be chaired by the vice wing commander and the wing mentor.

"Please ride safe," added Sergeant Arant. "The best part of a ride is being able to do the next one."

Mandatory safety equipment for motorcycle riders:

All SOFA status members assigned to Yokota who operate a motorcycle on or off base are required to wear the following safety equipment in accordance with Air Force Instruction 91-207:

⇒ a Department of Transportation or SNELL approved helmet that is at least a 3/4 or full face helmet with full face shield

⇒ long sleeve shirt or jacket

⇒ reflective vest that is either orange or lime green in color and be a total of 138 square inches

⇒ full length pants (preferably thick jeans or leathers)

⇒ boots that cover at least the ankles

⇒ full fingered gloves

⇒ back packs must have reflective material or a reflector belt attached, or the reflective vest worn over it

Remember to be a good Wingman by doing a pre-ride safety check with others before a ride.



photo by Tech. Sgt. Shane A. Cuomo

Honoring "The spirit of 'Go for broke'"

Barney Haji, Shizuya Hayashi and Ed Ichiyama pose in front of a C-17 Globemaster III named "The Spirit of 'Go for Broke'" during an arrival ceremony at Hickam Air Force Base, Hawaii, June 14. The men are veterans of the 442nd Combat Regimental Team. The aircraft is named in honor of their unit.

Nihon-go now

⇒ Sushi is delicious.

O-sushi wa oishi desu.

(oh-soo-shee wah oh-ee-shee dess.)

⇒ Shrimp

Ebi.

(eh-bee.)

⇒ Cooked salmon

Yaki-sarmon.

(yah-kee sa-le-mon.)

⇒ Raw tuna

Maguro.

(mah-goo-loo.)

⇒ Cooked egg

Tamago.

(tah-mah-goh.)

⇒ Raw salmon

Sarmon.

(sah-le-mon.)

⇒ Fermented soybeans

Nato.

(nah-toh.)

AD

Airmen attend war memorial ceremony

By Capt. Warren Comer
374th Airlift Wing Public Affairs

On June 17, Airmen from the 374th Airlift Wing traveled to Shizuoka City to honor the nearly 2,000 Japanese people and 23 American Airmen who died during World War II in a nighttime bombing raid.

In attendance were approximately 200 Japanese citizens of Shizuoka City and Airmen stationed at Yokota Air Base.

The ceremony honors the extraordinary transformation of America and Japan as the most hated of enemies to the strongest of friends.

On June 20, 1945, Airmen flying B-29 Superfortress bombers attacked the city shortly after midnight, but during the attack two of the bombers collided in mid-air and many of the aircraft parts were strewn throughout the area. Much of the wreckage was located on the small plantation of Fukumatsu Ito, who owned a distillery and was a member of the city assembly at that time.

Among the wreckage were the bodies of the American crewmen. While many of the local people hated Americans for attacking them, Mr. Ito thought all people should be mourned in death, thus taking their bodies and placing them in a local shrine with the bodies of the people who had been killed in the attack.

As a testament to Mr. Ito's selflessness and compassion

for both American and Japanese people who died that day, a memorial was made on the top of Mount Shizuhata. In 1972, the first Japanese-American Joint Memorial Service was held and continues every year since.

Shortly after Mr. Ito's death in 1991, Dr. Hiroya Sugano took over the ceremony. "I believe the first step to world peace is to talk about our actual feelings together," said Dr. Sugano in opening remarks at the ceremony. "I hope we can fulfill the late Mr. Ito's wishes with this holy ceremony."

Officials from Yokota attended the event to pay respect for the efforts made by Japanese and Americans in the past, while calling on future generations to press on with these efforts.

"We must continue to strengthen our partnership between the United States and Japan," said Col. Paul Montgomery, 374th Airlift Wing commander. "Our efforts must be concentrated on further developing the mutual understanding and friendships that will allow us to continue to be one of the strongest alliances the world knows today."

Also in attendance was Jerry Yellin, a P-51 Mustang fighter pilot during World War II, who was stationed in Iwo Jima and flew regular missions over Shizuoka City on his way to Tokyo.

"I (took part in) 19 long

range missions that lasted seven and a half to eight hours and strafed Numazu where my son, Richard, his wife, Takako and my three grandchildren now live," said Mr. Yellin. "I came here to remember and honor the memories of two million Japanese soldiers and civilians whose lives were snuffed out in World War II."



photos by Capt. Warren Comer

Above, Jerry Yellin, left, former P-51 Mustang pilot and World War II veteran, and Col. Paul Montgomery, 374th Airlift Wing commander, place flowers at the Shizuoka B-29 memorial. Bottom, Lt. Col. Robert Buente, left, 374th Operations Support Squadron commander, and Capt. Ryan Boyle, 459th Airlift Squadron, pour bourbon over the granite B-29 memorial.



July 4th events offer fun for all

By Senior Airman Katie Thomas
Editor

This year's Independence Day celebration offers something for everyone – come rain or shine.

It kicks off July 3 with a Texas Hold'em tournament at the Enlisted Club. The final table will be played July 4, at Hangar 15.

Other events on July 4 include the classic Leaky Kon-Tiki challenge, where participants make a boat out of cardboard and race it at the Natatorium, begins at 9 a.m. A goofy golf tournament begins at 8 a.m. at the Par 3.

A Memphis-style barbecue cook-off competition at Hangar 15 starts at 10 a.m. with a top prize of \$500.

Entertainment at Hangar 15 begins at 2 p.m. There will be a children's boardwalk, pet show, Blues Brothers show, and an American pop impersonators' show, which starts at 6:30 p.m.

Fireworks begin at approximately 8:40 p.m. and last for nearly half an hour.

For more information, read the latest edition of "Horizons" or watch the Services Channel.

(Courtesy of 374th Services Division)

AD

Mentoring

Take time to encourage, grow floundering Airmen everyday

By Lt. Col. Leslie Dixon
374th Medical Support Squadron

A few weeks ago at a promotion celebration I met Brig. Gen. Gary McCoy. It reminded me that we had met about three years ago at Pope Air Force Base, N.C. He was the guest speaker for the African-American Heritage Committee annual luncheon.

We met early one morning for breakfast where he spoke briefly about how important mentoring was to him. I was already behind for the day and wondered what adjustments I could make to my hectic schedule. As I sat there listening and watching the young Airmen, my attitude began to change. General McCoy was preaching my favorite sermon: mentoring.

I left the dining hall that morning feeling uplifted and positive. I was ready to hit three meetings and dig through my e-mail.

Mentoring has played an enormous role in my life. It has allowed me to have a successful Air Force career. Just as importantly, it has given me an opportunity to serve my community and family in ways I never thought possible.

At the African-American Heritage Committee luncheon, I arrived a few minutes early. I took a seat and waited for the luncheon and General McCoy's speech to begin. Over half way through his speech, he began to talk again about mentoring and what his mentor meant to him.

As I sat there, I thought about one of my greatest mentors and best friend, William "Byrd" Goodman and what a critical role he played in my life. He taught me to set goals and to focus on them, to be compassionate with others, and to always do my best.

No, Byrd Goodman didn't beat these notions into me. He wasn't that way at all. Over the summers I spent working in his restaurant and volunteering throughout our community, he somehow made it stick.

At the end of the shift, he would always take me home last. At first, I didn't like that at all. Being a teenager, I wanted to get home as soon as I could to make it to a party, a dance, or to get on the phone before one of my sisters.

Over time, I began to look forward to our time to talk. We would talk about country music, politics, the goings-on in our small town and what I wanted to be when I grew up.

Often we would make stops on the way home to drop off dinner or lunch to an elderly couple or someone just home from the hospital. I guess he must have fed half the folks in town at some point.

At Christmas, I'd help him make gift baskets filled with fruits, nuts and a turkey that he'd deliver on Christmas morning or the night before to folks around our little town. The list grew every year.

Eventually, I went off to college. We would get together on every visit home to catch up on

things. I would always find him at the restaurant or in his garden picking fruit or vegetables. He loved his work and people. He built the restaurant into a thriving business and certainly could afford to have someone manage it for him. But, it was his dream and he didn't think anyone would be as passionate about it. Besides, it gave an opportunity to help a lot of people.

Eventually, he sold the restaurant, but we remained close over the years. I would often call him to discuss concerns I had at work or with the children or just to share some good news.

Just before the Christmas holiday, he passed away. He was an amazing person. I miss him and think of him often.

He was more than my mentor, he was a devoted friend. He shared every significant event in my life from my children's births to three college degrees, promotions, and most recently, my selection to command. He was always there to gently guide me along the way.

I consider myself fortunate to have several mentors, people who have taken the time to help me avoid and deal with mistakes throughout my life and not just my career. Most of my mentors don't look like me. They come from different cultures, ethnic, and economic backgrounds. They have all been a big part of my life.

That is why I think that mentoring is both an obligation and privilege I take very seriously. It doesn't take a lot of effort, just

the commitment and desire to help others succeed. From the most junior Airman to the most senior officer in my squadron, all are encouraged to mentor someone. In fact, it is an expectation. We all have something to offer.

As you go about your busy day, I encourage you to take time out to mentor someone you know is floundering and may not appreciate his or her value to the success of the mission. It doesn't have to be long and drawn out.

Mentoring can take place in all kinds of ways. It is not about how much time you have, but what you do with it. It is your call. Once you get involved, you will be amazed how good it makes you feel at the end of day.

I am indebted to Byrd Goodman, who took the time to guide me. Who knows, without his guidance I could have taken the wrong path. Instead, I am blessed to serve in the world's greatest Air Force and medical service.

Today, I spend quite a bit of time mentoring young Airmen across the services. No, they do not all look like me. They are people who have reached out and asked for assistance. In turn, they reach back and help others. It is the most rewarding feeling to help others succeed. It has given me the greatest joy.

If you are not mentoring someone, you are missing a great opportunity to have a positive influence in someone's life. If you are mentoring—pass it on.

To be successful leaders we must constantly evolve

By Brig. Gen. (Dr.) James Dougherty
81st Medical Group commander

KEESLER AIR FORCE BASE, Miss. (AFPN) — Leadership is often thought of as a skill that's developed gradually, but I disagree.

In my journey through the ranks, I've often wondered how our systematic approach to officer development translates to actual leadership growth. The Air Force promotes gradual increases in responsibility and mentoring from senior officers. But has anyone completed a case study of officers who have undergone leadership development to determine our actual return on the investment?

In a past assignment, a new commander came into my unit. The orderly room staff was doing their usual "beating the bushes" to find any "intel" on the new boss. By talking with friends and connections at the commander's old unit, they knew exactly who was coming.

Then I overheard one of the sergeants say she remembered him as a second lieutenant. I

asked, now that almost 15 years had passed and he's a colonel, how he's changed. Her response is ingrained in my memory, "He's still the same." I don't think she was saying he still acted like a second lieutenant, but that he led like one. To me, the implication was that what you learn during your initial experience as an officer or enlisted Airman sets the tone for the rest of your career.

I can't count the times I've heard that if you want to be a general or chief you need to prepare when you are a lieutenant or Airman. This is true, but you also need to be aware that more than likely your disposition 10 to 20 years from now has been predetermined. How we handle people and situations early on becomes a permanent part of our personality.

This isn't to say there isn't anything you can do about it, but I believe if you continue your career with blinders on, then yes, you'll still be a "second lieutenant" or "Airman" when you retire.

So how do we escape our predetermined

approach to leadership? I believe the answer lies in constant evolution and a state of awareness — keeping your ears to the ground, accepting criticism from all sources and doing what's right. There will always be someone better than you, there may be someone trying to hold you down and there can be someone trying to lift you up.

You might not always be around "the someone" you want, but you need to learn from every experience, and remember you're "the someone" for those around you. Seek out new experiences and new opportunities, and soak up knowledge from those around you to improve yourself and your teammates. In this way, you evolve as a person and as a leader, removing the blinders that keep you from going beyond your predetermined limits.

Where do you start? Promote constant evolution in others through this rule: Never try to take down your competition; try to make yourself better first and then help your competition to be better than you.



Published by Eight Co., Ltd., a private firm in no way connected with the U.S. Air Force, under exclusive contract with the 374th Airlift Wing. This commercial enterprise Air Force newspaper is an authorized publication for members of the U.S. military service. Contents of the Fuji Flyer are not necessarily the official views of, or endorsed by, the U.S. Government, the Department of Defense, or the Department of the Air Force. The appearance of advertising in this publication, including inserts or supplements, does not constitute endorsement by the Department of Defense, the Department of the Air Force, or Eight Co., Ltd. of the products advertised.

Everything advertised in this publication shall be made available for purchase, use or patronage without regard to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, martial status, physical handicap, political affiliation or any other nonmerit factor of the purchaser, user or patron.

All photographs used in the Fuji Flyer are official Air Force photographs, unless otherwise indicated.

How to reach us

Editorial content is prepared by the 374th Airlift Wing Public Affairs Office, Bldg. 315, Yokota Air Base, Japan.

Phone: 225-8833

Fax: 225-4867

Mail to: 374 AW/PA, Unit 5078, APO AP 96326-5078 or send to: fuji.flyer@yokota.af.mil

Deadlines

The deadline for articles, briefs and classifieds is Wednesday the week before publication. For holidays, the deadline is one day earlier.

Editorial staff

Col. Scott Goodwin

374th Airlift Wing commander

Maj. David Westover

Chief, Public Affairs

Capt. Warren Comer

Deputy Chief, Public Affairs

Capt. Ben Alumbaugh

Chief, Plans and Operations

Master Sgt. Dominique Brown

Superintendent, Public Affairs

Staff Sgt. Karen J. Tomasik

Chief, Internal Information

Senior Airman Katie Thomas

Editor

Eight Co., Ltd.

Publisher

DUI Prevention

June 14 – June 20	0
Total DUIs in June	0
Total in 2006	7

Punishment

.049 or less = car parked for 12 hours
.05-.079 = 6 months walking
.081-.149 = 1 year walking
0.15 or greater = 2 years walking

*Don't
drink and drive.
Call 225-RIDE!*

Space A destinations...

By Jennifer Hensley
Fuji Flyer Contributor

Looking for an adventure this summer? Maybe you want to hit the pristine beaches of Hawaii's coast or fish in the crystal-clear waters of Alaska. Wherever your destination, one of the best – and most affordable – ways to get there is by way of Space Available travel.

Space A travel at Yokota is operated by the 730th Air Mobility Command, or AMC, and offers a wealth of choices when it comes to travel. And while it may be one of the best deals in town on airline tickets, sometimes traveling Space A comes with a pretty hefty price tag.

When Staff Sgt. Philip Meetze and his family planned a vacation to the states recently, they got a little bit more than they bargained for. They originally planned on traveling to Charleston, S.C., by way of Anchorage, Alaska and Seattle, Wash., but when the plane they were flying in broke at their first stop in Alaska, their plans changed significantly. "We landed in Anchorage and found out there was a maintenance delay," said Philip's wife, Melissa. A 48-hour delay turned into the mission being cancelled alto-

gether.

"Luckily, we had family in Anchorage. We were able to stay with them and in the mean time, book a commercial flight to Seattle," said Mrs. Meetze. "We never did make it to Charleston. It wasn't what we planned, but it could have been a lot worse."

With two kids in tow, the Meetze family says being flexible is the motto when flying Space A. "Always travel with a pillow and blanket. You just never know where you're going to end up."

The AMC operates roughly 20 missions each week, and transports literally

hundreds of passengers each month to destinations like Okinawa, Singapore, Guam, Korea, Hawaii and several locations throughout the United States. While most flights are free, traveling

to a destination on the Patriot Express will cost approximately \$26 per person depending on the exact location.

Space A travelers are organized into categories according to their status and eligibility. Active duty passengers on official orders (including PCS orders) have top priority. For overseas travelers

looking to better their chances of getting on a Space A flight, Environmental Morale Leave is the way to go.

EML grants airmen and their families stationed overseas special consideration for travel. According to 1st Lt. Sean Setter, Officer in Charge of Passenger and Fleet Services for the AMC, using EML orders definitely increases your chances of getting to where you want to go.

"It's a good way to go. With EML orders, you're more likely to get on the flight you want because you have priority over passengers without that advantage."

When traveling Space A, timing is everything. Lieutenant Setter says the best thing a traveler can do when planning to fly Space A is show up early. "Flights change, crews leave early. Schedules change overnight so it's essential that travelers show up as early as possible for flights or they risk losing their seats."

Of course, it's also important to be prepared. Travelers should bring food and plenty of cash just in case space isn't available on a flight either departing or leaving their destination.

"Traveling Space A was a great experience for us," said Mrs. Meetze. "Of course, not everything went as planned but we made the most of our time and we ended up having a great vacation."



courtesy photo

Space A travel offers eligible members to opportunity to travel to worldwide destinations such as Singapore (left), Alaska (above), Guam (below), Hawaii (far lower left) and more. Travelers can try to catch flights directly to their final destination or use Space A to cover one leg of their trips to exotic locations.



courtesy photo

Tips for making the most of Space A travel

- * **Make sure you have enough leave to cover delays. Space A flights are not guaranteed and some travelers can experience unexpected setbacks.**
- * **Travel with plenty of cash. Make sure you have enough to cover the cost of food and lodging if you do experience a delay. It's also helpful to have money to purchase commercial airline tickets, if necessary.**
- * **Check the status of your flight early and often. Changes in schedules, destinations and routes occur frequently and sometimes without advance notice.**
- * **Pets are not allowed to travel Space A.**
- * **Checked baggage has specific weight limits, depending on the aircraft. As a general rule, baggage is limited to two pieces per passenger at 70 pounds each; bags weighing 71 to 100 pounds will be considered two pieces. Only one carry on bag is allowed per passenger.**
- * **Be flexible! With flights subject to change without notice, have an alternate plan in mind in case getting to your original destination isn't possible.**
- * **For more information, or to sign up for a Space A flight, call 255-5661.**



courtesy photo



courtesy photo

AD

“Quotes” & Things

*“Let the teachers
learn the kids English.
Ol’ Diz will learn
the kids baseball.”*
Dizzy Dean

Yoga: Lessons have been delayed until July, however sign up now to reserve a slot at the Taiyo Recreation center. Lessons will be Tuesdays and Thursdays from 11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. The cost is \$30 a month. Call 225-6955.

Bowling: Tomodachi Lanes is hosting Colorama night Tuesday beginning at 6:30 p.m. The cost is \$15 a person.

Archery: An archery camp for youth age nine to 18 years old is being hosted Monday through June 30. Sign up at the west or east youth center.

Soccer: Base organizations participating in this year’s soccer intramural season must turn in a letter of intent by Monday. A coaches meeting is Wednesday at 2 p.m. at the Samurai Fitness Center. Call 225-8881.

Triathlon: Camp Zama is hosting its annual triathlon July 23 from 8 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. The first 60 Status of Forces Agreement personnel to sign up receive free entry. Call 263-5656 or e-mail kimberly.bailes@zama.army.mil.

Football: The Yokota Warriors varsity football team’s homecoming game vs the Kadena Dragons is June 24, at 6 p.m, at Bonk Field.

Home safety: June is home safety month. Community members need to test smoke detectors, and lock up household chemicals and medications.

CE sergeant closes in on Olympic hopes

By Senior Airman Katie Thomas
Editor

This year’s track and field season has ended, and Yokota’s own Eric Schmidt can’t wait for the next year’s to start.

The 374th Civil Engineer Squadron noncommissioned officer and Air Force track team member wrapped up this season competing at the CC Air HQ Track and Field Championships at Ramstein Air Base, Germany, earlier this month.

Schmidt took first and set a new record in the 400-meter dash with a time of 48.42. He also took third place in the 200-meter dash with 22.21.

In the 4x100 meter relay, Schmidt and his teammates claimed first and set a new record of 41.71. They repeated this victory in the 4x400 meter relay with a 3:17.04.

The U.S. Air Force men’s team took second in the championships overall.

“Though we took many places and set new records, the Germans beat us because they overwhelmed us in distance events,” said Schmidt.

This year he also competed at the Widener University Invitational, Pennsylvania, in late April. In the 100-meter dash, he clocked 11.00; in the 200-meter, 21.85; and in the 400-meter, 48.50.

Schmidt went to the renowned Penn Relays, hosted by the University of Pennsylvania, also in late April. In the Olympic Development 4x100 meter relay, he and his teammates ran 43.18. They also competed in the OD 4x400 meter relay, taking third place with 3:15.52.

“It is almost impossible to compete in Japan unless you are already a world-class athlete so it has been a challenge staying competitive during my time in Japan,” said Schmidt. “I am constantly looking for opportunities so I can improve with the competition.”

From 4:30 to 7:30 a.m. practically every day prior to and during the track season, he is chasing his dream of making it to the Olympic trials.

“I am right on track to get the times I need to qualify next year,” he said. “I just missed the qualifying time this year.”

Schmidt said he would also like to make it to the World Military Olympic games, also known as the International Military Sports Council. These games are the equivalent of the world games, except only military members can participate.

All the training and competing was in addition to being a husband, a father, and holding down an active-duty military career.

Yet, he credits his ability to earn these achieve-



courtesy photo

Staff Sgt. Eric Schmidt, right, 374th Civil Engineer Squadron, runs the 4x400 at the CC Air HQ Track and Field Championships.

ments to the support of his family and squadron.

“I have to thank my wife, Angela, and my two daughters, Jasmine and Gabrielle, for putting up with me and sticking through the hard times when I was gone,” he said. “The squadron also has been very supportive, allowing me time to travel and compete.”

Schmidt is taking a two-month hiatus from his usual regimented track conditioning prior to the start of the new season in late summer.

Getting ‘back’ to basics can prevent back pain

By Maj. Sheila Thornton
374th Aerospace Medicine Squadron

The Air Force Medical Service has selected June as Back Injury Prevention Month.

Back pain can result from any number of things and can come on suddenly or develop slowly, over a period of time. Lifting too much or poor posture can have the same result – pain.

The American Academy of Orthopedic Surgeons reports that an estimated four out of five people will be affected by back pain at some point in their lives.

The keys to preventing back pain are good posture, regular exercise and maintaining a healthy weight.

It may be hard to believe that chronic back pain can result from something as simple as poor posture, but it is true. Improper posture puts a strain on muscles and ligaments. Good posture keeps your body in proper alignment, relieving muscles of necessary stress and strain. When sitting, people’s ears, shoulders, and hips should be in line. Good posture keeps the three natural curves of the spine in balance and allows back muscles to support the spine without additional strain.

Some people have the mistaken belief that only the muscles of the back need to be strong to prevent back pain. Actually, having strong muscles in the lower back isn’t as important as having

well-conditioned abdominal or stomach muscles. These muscles work with the back muscles to stabilize the spine, so it remains in a neutral position. Weak abdominal muscles can cause people to overcompensate with their back muscles when playing sports or lifting. This increases the danger of back strain.

Leg muscles also affect the health of the back. When people make their leg muscles do most of the lifting work, they take a big burden off the back. It is important to keep flexible front thigh muscles, called quadriceps, and back thigh muscles, called hamstrings. Tight hamstrings can pull on the back, making the back work harder. Even strong side muscles and strong arms mean less work for your back.

If people are currently suffering from any type of back pain, they should talk to their health care

provider before beginning an exercise program.

If people want to reduce their risk of back pain, practice exercises that improve flexibility, strength, and endurance of the abdominal, back and leg muscles. Two exercises good for the back are partial sit-ups and press-ups. Both strengthen the abdominal muscles and aid in flexibility. People can do these exercises at home without any special equipment.

By getting into the habit of exercising daily, people may be rewarded with a life free of back pain.

People can also pick up a free copy of the Managing Low Back Pain pamphlet from the 374th Medical Group’s orthopedic clinic.

For more information or assistance in developing a good back exercise program, contact the Health And Wellness Center at 225-8322.

AD